

Support of Voluntary EPA Global Warming Mitigation Programs

STATEMENT OF ISSUE:

The impacts and costs of global warming represent severe strain on local government to maintain strong local economies; and to protect public health, the environment, and the quality of life in our cities and counties.

BACKGROUND:

The International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) released its revised statement on climate change January 22, 2001. The report emphasizes the serious threat global warming poses to local communities. The report states that global temperatures could rise by 10.5 degrees with the rate of change the greatest in over 10,000 years.

Between 1988 and 1997, heat waves, storms, floods, and other extreme weather events in the United States caused an estimated \$140 billion in property damage.

FEMA and other Federal disaster funds cannot begin to cover the economic and human losses that have been caused by these weather disasters. Local communities bear the brunt of the human and economic damage, and are witnessing a decline in the quality of life we have worked so hard to achieve.

Meanwhile, scientific evidence of atmospheric warming continues to grow. In the first three months of 1999 alone, researchers analyzing tree rings and ice cores concluded that the 1990's were the warmest decade of the millennium; NASA found that Greenland's massive ice sheet is melting rapidly; and the American Geophysical Union released a warning that atmospheric warming "provides a compelling basis for legitimate public concern over future global and regional-scale changes resulting from increased concentration of greenhouse gases." In 2000, there was water over the North Pole for the first time in 50,000 years.

Existing technology and practices can be used to reduce pollution that causes global warming in a cost-effective manner to enhance economic development. Some local governments, with technical assistance from the EPA and other agencies, have initiated energy efficiency, transportation efficiency, and renewable energy programs to help save money, to create jobs

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and strengthen the local economy, and to increase the livability of communities. Promoting energy efficiency and alternatives to automobile transportation; reducing, reusing materials and then recycling waste material; and increasing the use of renewable energy all reduce greenhouse gas emissions and strengthen communities.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. The LGAC strongly recommends that the EPA maintain and strengthen its programs in the Office of Air & Radiation, such as the State and Local Capacity Building Branch and the Energy Star program.
2. The LGAC further recommends that the EPA cooperate with other Federal agencies such as the Department of Energy and FEMA to provide information developed by the International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and U. S. Global Change Research Program (USGCRP), and other scientific information to local jurisdictions.
3. The LGAC further recommends that the EPA continue to offer incentives to local governments that assist local businesses and other citizens to implement cost-effective conservation and energy-efficiency measures.
4. **We urge the EPA, Congress and the Administration to make this reduce the domestic sources of greenhouse gases, the pollution warming.**